

Message Text

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12

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 AGR-20 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15

DRC-01 /096 W

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R 040725Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2336

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 2878

PLEASE PASS AGRICULTURE (KALLEMEYN) AND LABOR (SEGALL)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR ETRO SW

SUBJ: AFL-CIO BOYCOTT ON LETTUCE AND GRAPES

REF: STOCKHOLM 2217, FASTO 49

1. THE PLANNED MEETING DESCRIBED REFTEL BETWEEN SWEDISH CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (LO) AND SWEDISH FRUIT IMPORTERS' ASSOCIATION TOOK PLACE JUNE 20. LO WAS JOINED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SWEDISH CENTRAL ORGANIZATION OF SALARIED EMPLOYEES (TCO). FRUIT IMPORTERS' ASS'N OFFICIALS WERE JOINED BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF EACH MAJOR IMPORTING FIRM. OUTCOME WAS INDECISIVE: BOTH GROUPS HAVE AGREED TO SEEK MORE INFORMATION AND MEET AGAIN IN MID AUGUST.

2. DURING DISCUSSION LO AND TCO REPRESENTATIVES REQUESTED FRUIT AND VEGETABLE IMPORTERS TO REFRAIN FROM BUYING ANY US LETTUCE OR GRAPES WHICH DID NOT BEAR THE EAGLE BRAND, I.E. THE MARK OF THE UFW.

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3. IMPORTERS ARGUED THAT IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO TAKE SIDES

BETWEEN THE TWO COMPETING UNIONS SINCE IT IS UNCLEAR AT PRESENT WHICH ONE REALLY REPRESENTS THE FARM WORKERS. RUMORS WERE REPORTED THAT UFW MEMBERSHIP WAS DOWN TO 5,000 WHILE TEAMSTER FARM WORKER MEMBERS WERE NOW UP TO 40,000 WITH MEMBERSHIP DRIVE CONTINUING.

4. EMBASSY PLEASED TO LEARN FROM FASTO 49 OF MEETING WITH SWEDISH LABOR ATTACHE BIRGER VIKLUND. IMPORTERS HERE HAD INDICATED DESIREABILITY OF SUCH A MEETING. THEY UNDERSTAND VIKLUND PLANS TO GO TO CALIFORNIA AND MEET WITH UNITED FARM WORKERS.

5. RE REQUEST IN FASTO 49 THAT EMBASSY EVALUATE EFFECTS OF POSSIBLE BOYCOTT, THIS WAS DISCUSSED BRIEFLY IN STOCKHOLM 2217. AS INDICATED THERE, CHANCES OF STRONG SUPPORT FOR BOYCOTT NOT LIKELY. HOWEVER, IF BOYCOTT IS TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY ANY ONE OF SEVERAL GROUPS, THE FOLLOWING RESULTS MIGHT BE EXPECTED.

6. AS TO GRAPES, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS NO, REPEAT NO, US GRAPE PRODUCER EXPORTING GRAPES WHO HAS CONTRACT WITH UNITED FARM WORKERS. THEREFORE IF SWEDISH DOCK WORKERS REFUSED TO UNLOAD NON-UFW GRAPES, THIS WOULD MEAN ZERO SALES. IF UNION OF SALES PERSONNEL IN SWEDISH STORES REFUSED TO HANDLE NON-UFW GRAPES, THE EFFECT WOULD BE THE SAME. BUT IF ACTION LIMITED TO CONSUMER BOYCOTT THE EFFECT WILL LIKELY BE QUITE LIMITED. STRONGEST EFFECT WILL LIKELY BE SEEN IN KF STORES (THE SWEDISH COOPERATIVE UNION AND WHOLESALE SOCIETY, WHICH HAS NON-THIRD OF SWEDEN'S GROCERY TRADE). SOME LOCAL SOCIETIES WHICH CONTROL POLICY OF STORES MIGHT VOTE NOT TO STOCK NON-UFW GRAPES, AND OTHER PRESSURES MIGHT BE BROUGHT ON STORE MANAGERS. AVAILABILITY OF GRAPES FROM COMPETING COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY SPAIN, WILL ALSO BE A FACTOR.

B. AS TO LETTUCE: THERE IS ONLY ONE US LETTUCE PRODUCER WHICH HAS CONTRACT WITH UFW. THAT FIRM, INTERHARVEST, HAS AN EXCLUSIVE AGREEMENT WITH ONE SWEDISH IMPORTER, AMERICAN FOODS AB. SO IF BOYCOTT ACTION EFFECTIVE, AT EITHER TRADE OR CONSUMER LEVEL, IT WILL MEAN THAT OTHER MAJOR IMPORTERS - PRIMARILY KF (SEE ABOVE) AND ICA (WHICH HAS ABOUT 38 PERCENT OF RETAIL TRADE) WILL BE UNABLE TO GET A US SUPPLIER. IN PAST ICA HAS GONE WITHOUT US UNCLASSIFIED

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LETTUCE AND TURNED TO OTHER SOURCES, RATHER THAN BUYING FROM AMERICAN FOODS. KF HAS BOUGHT SOME FROM AMERICAN FOODS BUT WITH RELUCTANCE. RESULT WILL THEREBY LIKELY BE A REDUCTION IN US LETTUCE SALES AND INCREASED SALES FROM COMPETING SOURCES, PROBABLY SPAIN.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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